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New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 33 and agenda item 41 (*continued*)

Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/172)

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

(a) **Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/156 and Corr.1)

(b) **Implementation of the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/175)

The Acting President: Members will recall that, on 16 September 2002, the General Assembly held a high-level plenary meeting to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (spoke in French): My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for his exhaustive reports on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/57/172) and on the implementation of the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (A/57/175).

Those two reports deal with many similar issues, so it is appropriate that the General Assembly should consider them jointly; it is certainly true that peace and development are intrinsically linked and that, as it has so rightly been said, development is peace by another name.

With regard specifically to peace, Algeria welcomes the attention that the Secretary-General has continued to focus on the settlement of conflict in Africa, in particular by sending special envoys or representatives to Angola, Burundi, the Horn of Africa, the Sudan, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic; avoiding the duplication of mediation efforts; mobilizing international support for peace; collaborating more effectively with the African Union and subregional organizations; and supporting African initiatives to resolve conflicts in Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

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With regard to development issues, it should be noted from the outset that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly, meeting in substantive session in September to consider the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, reached the unanimous conclusion that the New Agenda had failed.

The report of the independent Panel of Eminent Personalities appointed by the Secretary-General outlines, in an objective way and with great relevance, the reasons and factors, both endogenous and exogenous, that were at the root of that failure, and sets out guidelines, in the form of lessons learned, for future support and assistance by the United Nations and the international community for Africa's development efforts through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) — a framework that will henceforth provide support for all the development strategies and programmes of African countries, as well as for external cooperation and assistance initiatives aimed at Africa.

The independent evaluation of the UN-NADAF — the high quality of which has been universally acknowledged — rightly identified as a first lesson the incompatibility of conflict and development. Peace and security are certainly a prerequisite for development. Even though progress has been made in the past 10 years thanks to the joint efforts of African countries themselves and the United Nations, many conflicts continue to exist and to devastate a number of countries in several regions of a continent that is also prey to disease and poverty.

NEPAD, which was recently endorsed by the General Assembly, following the substantive session of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the implementation of the UN-NADAF, as being the political framework for Africa's development, recognizes conflict resolution and the promotion of peace and security as a sine qua non for any effort at development or progress.

NEPAD, as created by African leaders, developed naturally from their shared awareness of the need to take Africa's destiny into their own hands, taking into account global requirements and the contemporary realities of the African continent.

The commitment of the African countries with regard to respect for human rights, good governance and democracy is aimed at the promotion of an environment of stability and peace that, in turn, is an essential basis for the achievement of sustainable development in Africa. Africans themselves will be responsible for the success of that collective African programme, but it will also depend on the genuine, effective contribution of the United Nations system and the international community as a whole.

The recent creation within the Security Council of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, followed by the establishment last July, within the Economic and Social Council, of an ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict, demonstrate the concern of the United Nations about to the instability that is hindering development efforts in Africa. This is a strong expression of its commitment to working in an integrated manner, not only to prevent and resolve conflict, but to help African countries to undertake, in a coordinated and effective manner, the reconstruction of their economies.

That is an encouraging approach that deserves to be supported and consolidated. While my delegation acknowledges the scope and the importance of this, we believe that ongoing collaboration between those two United Nations mechanisms and the Peace and Security Council recently established by the African Union will be essential. In his report on the independent evaluation of the UN-NADAF, the Secretary-General rightly highlights the fact that enhanced coordination and collaboration can produce results that exceed the sum total of individual contributions and can thus magnify the overall impact of the United Nations system.

The reasons given in the evaluation report to explain the inadequate progress made by UN-NADAF include many major factors that hindered the implementation of the New Agenda. These include, in particular, the commitments made by the international community with regard to official development assistance, terms of trade and debt relief.

As Africa's financial resources are generally limited, the active support of the international community is essential if we want to prevent NEPAD from suffering the same fate as UN-NADAF. The follow-up within the United Nations, and at the African

level through the Peer Review Mechanism, of the international community's contribution will allow for the continual assessment of progress, as well as of the difficulties encountered in the implementation of NEPAD.

The review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for Africa's Development will inform us in a responsible way about the approach to use in assisting Africa's economic and social recovery and in ensuring a sustainable development that will be in the interest not only of Africans but of the world as a whole.

We hope that through support provided to NEPAD by the international community and the United Nations system, as well as the Group of Eight, Africa will be able rapidly to close the divide that separates it from other continents and help it to become actively integrated into the world's economy.

Mr. Tayeb (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express our deep thanks and gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/57/172 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. As a matter of fact, and in view of the great importance that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia attaches to the realization of peace and stability in Africa, my delegation wishes to commend the vital role played and the tireless efforts deployed by the United Nations and its Secretary-General to assist this great continent in putting an end to wars and conflicts and to work towards the realization of sustainable development and prosperity in our sisterly African countries.

We fully agree with the contents of the report submitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General on the linkage between peace and sustainable development. Experience, especially in the African continent, has shown that development cannot be realized without an environment of peace and security.

Despite the fact that some African countries have reached a substantial level of economic development, setbacks have been experienced due to conflicts, strife and civil wars. Thus we support the efforts of the United Nations to address the root causes of conflict so that they can be dealt with radically and further conflicts prevented, which will preserve the continent from tragedy and suffering, eliminate tensions and instability and allow for the realization of sustainable development in the continent.

To this effect, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the return of peace and stability to several regions in Africa. It is gratified that the borders between Ethiopia and Eritrea have been demarcated, and that a peace treaty has been concluded between the Government and the rebels in Angola, paving the way for an end to the longest civil war that Africa has ever witnessed.

At the same time, we are concerned at the continuation of strife and conflict that could threaten peace and security and destroy all prospects for development. We feel gravely concerned at, and regret that, the conflict in southern Sudan still rages because of external interference. We are concerned also at the situation in Somalia. As is well known, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made great efforts to put an end to the conflict in Somalia, and hosted the Mecca conference for national reconciliation in Somalia. My country also participated in the peacekeeping operation in Somalia under the auspices of the United Nations. We supported the Conference on National Reconciliation held in Arta, Djibouti, as a very important step towards the restoration of peace and security to that country, which has been ravaged by war for more than a decade now.

We are optimistic that the efforts that are being deployed to address the causes of conflict and to achieve durable peace will enable the realization of sustainable development, which is exactly what the peoples of Africa need to consolidate peace and to intensify their efforts to establish an economic infrastructure that enshrines development as a permanent objective of African countries, with a view to raising the standard of living of their peoples.

Aware of the importance of the international community's support and assistance for developing countries, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in the period 1975-2000, provided assistance to developing countries totalling 4 per cent of the average gross national product of the Kingdom. That assistance included concessional development loans provided by the Saudi Development Fund, which benefited 73 developing countries on various continents through bilateral and multilateral efforts.

My country responded to the call of the Sixth Islamic Summit Conference, held in Dakar, Senegal, in 1992, to alleviate the debt burden of developing

countries by cancelling official debts totalling $6 billion. In addition, in view of the water shortages faced by the countries of the African Sahel, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia allocated $180 million to implement a special programme to provide water and urgent food aid to rural areas in the Sahel countries.

In conclusion, I should like to assure the Assembly that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will continue its policy of supporting efforts to achieve peace and security, and that it will make whatever contribution it can to realizing sustainable development in Africa, so that the people of that great continent can enjoy the peace and prosperity that they so richly deserve.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Over the past year, the international community, in particular the United Nations and relevant international and regional organizations, have done commendable work in helping African countries in their efforts to achieve peace and development, and some progress has been registered in this regard.

The African countries themselves have also recommitted themselves to this cause and have made serious efforts to enhance their own capabilities in the area of conflict prevention and of the maintenance of peace, actively implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development. With the founding of the African Union, African countries took yet another important step towards enhancing collective self-reliance and internal cooperation. Those actions by the African countries have served to strengthen the confidence of the international community in the revitalization of Africa.

However, it should also pointed out that there has been no fundamental change in the difficult situation confronting the African continent. In many parts of Africa, poverty inevitably leads to conflict, and conflict in turn aggravates poverty. Considerable work remains to be done in the area of the eradication of poverty and backwardness and in curbing the spread of AIDS and other contagious diseases.

There is still a long way to go towards peace and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. Peace and development on the African continent are an important part of peace and development worldwide. There can be no significant or lasting prosperity and stability in the world without prosperity and stability in Africa. The international community should therefore give the serious challenges facing Africa the kind of attention they deserve.

In our view, priority should currently be given to the following three areas. First, the United Nations held the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development this year, producing the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation, respectively. The two conferences and their outcomes hold special significance for Africa in terms of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The high-level meeting in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), held by the General Assembly at this session, also reaffirmed the international community's vigorous support for the efforts of African countries in pursuit of unity, cooperation and the establishment of Africa's development strategies. For the time being, it is important to take advantage of this positive momentum to implement in earnest the existing programmes of action so as to translate commitments into concrete action.

Secondly, it is necessary to establish a global partnership in support of African development and to enhance coordination and cooperation within the United Nations system and between it and other agencies. The solution to African problems requires the combined efforts and cooperation of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat. It also requires the involvement of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions. It is important for the various bodies and agencies to undertake a comprehensive set of measures to engage in full and enhanced cooperation and coordination. It is likewise important to increase the input of resources, while respecting the ownership and leadership of African countries in their own development efforts. At the same time, the United Nations focus areas for African issues should be harmonized with the goals and priorities established by NEPAD.

Thirdly, while African countries continue to pursue their efforts in conflict prevention and poverty and disease reduction, the international community and the developed countries in particular should effectively honour their commitments of assistance and help African countries to enhance their capacity-building. It is our hope that the developed countries will, in view

of their own long-term interests, demonstrate the necessary political resolve to translate their pledges of assistance to Africa into concrete action. They are called on to turn their support for NEPAD into a new opportunity to open their markets to African countries, provide transfers of technologies, increase official development assistance and reduce or cancel African debt.

It is an important keystone of China's foreign policy to strengthen unity and cooperation with African countries. Ever since the China-Africa Cooperation Forum of October 2000, the achievement of peace, stability and development in Africa has been an objective of Chinese diplomacy, along with an increase in China's foreign trade and cooperation with African countries. China has taken active steps to honour its commitment to provide 10 billion yuan renminbi in debt relief to Africa within two years. To date, China has signed debt-relief agreements with 31 African countries, essentially achieving its stated goal.

Within the framework of South-South cooperation, China will further intensify its cooperation with Africa and provide genuine assistance to the best of its abilities so as to make its own contribution to peace and development in Africa.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express our thanks and gratitude to the Secretary-General for his progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, as well as his report on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). I have the honour to speak on these two issues on behalf of the African Group of States.

Our meeting today is of special importance, as it coincides with the General Assembly's adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the new framework through which the international community and the United Nations will mobilize all their efforts to help African States' achieve a better future for their coming generations. This is indeed a source of pride for Africa, since NEPAD is a home-grown initiative, elaborated by the Africans themselves and based on African realities and a comprehensive understanding of the problems and issues of the continent, as well as the hopes and aspirations of African peoples and their political leadership to a better future for their future generations.

The African States wish to express their appreciation to all Member States for the priority they have assigned to Africa. Our appreciation reflects the welcoming new spirit and growing conviction of the need for cooperation and solidarity with the international community in order to combine all such efforts, including those of the United Nations system and other international organizations, to assist in the full implementation of NEPAD, taking into consideration the lessons of the past, especially the results of the General Assembly's appraisal of the implementation of UN-NADAF. African countries welcome this positive trend, which they feel to be a true reflection of the international community's conviction that the eradication of poverty and the realization of sustainable development for all its members is a collective responsibility to be assumed by the countries of the North and the South through the establishment of a genuine partnership based on international solidarity and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as through the determined implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and of the outcomes of other international conferences and summits.

NEPAD, which establishes concepts and implementation programmes on the basis of partnership among African countries themselves, offers a new vision of genuine cooperation with its partners in development, the developed countries, the United Nations and all its organs, and other international organizations and institutions. This partnership should translate the objectives of NEPAD into concrete realities in the context of joint cooperation and mutual interests.

In this context, Africa proceeds from a collective view that does not distinguish between States. Instead it is working on an African unity that understands its common past and shares the present in all its dimensions, while looking to the future with ambition and aspirations. Consequently, it neither accepts selectivity nor conditionality and works with a common purpose and interest. It places no barriers between the benefiting African countries. African countries are equal with a common purpose, and their interests are mutual.

One of Africa's development objectives as mentioned in the Millennium Declaration, is to reduce the percentage of those who live on less than a dollar a day by 50 per cent by 2015. This goal will require that the continent achieve economic growth rates that exceed 7 per cent per year, which means that the financial gap estimated at $60 billion should be bridged. The international community is, therefore, required to arrive at a radical solution to Africa's external debts. It should open international markets to African exports and deal with the price fluctuations of primary commodities as well as assist these countries in increasing their production while diversifying their exports.

In addition, official development assistance (ODA) should be increased to reach the levels that were agreed on internationally, while transferring technology and providing the necessary technical assistance to African countries. In this respect, Africa is of the view that the resolutions of the Conferences of Doha and Monterrey, as well as the Johannesburg Summit, represent a serious start that should be emphasized, pursued and implemented as soon as possible.

African States have declared full ownership of the contents of the initiative represented by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and their commitment to fully implement all its political, economic, social and environmental components. To this end, they have established the institutional mechanisms necessary for this purpose. African countries believe that our meeting has led to the expansion of the circle of partners of Africa and mobilized the political and economic support needed to implement the initiative. African countries have also agreed on the definition of the role of the United Nations system, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society institutions, and on how these different actors can help them in the coming period. The Nations of Africa look forward to a new era of serious work at all levels that takes into consideration the experiences of the past and translates concretely their collective commitment to succeed in improving life on the continent.

It is incumbent on us to re-emphasize that the settlement of armed conflicts in Africa and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development on the continent are all collective responsibilities that the international community should shoulder, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter that regulates the work of this international Organization. This should be done out of a deep conviction that Africa represents an important and integral part of the current international order.

We must also agree on what responsibilities we as Africans should shoulder and on what our partners in the international community should shoulder. This is the mandate that we should exercise within the General Assembly, the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations.

We have no doubt that Africa, as represented by the African Union and its subregional organizations, has shown the political will to settle its problems and disputes in a peaceful manner. We have been able to establish areas of peace, as has been witnessed during the past few years and as is reflected in the important resolutions adopted at the last African Summit held in Durban, South Africa. We also believe that there is real conviction regarding the role that the Security Council has started to play in the settlement of disputes on the continent; the attention that the General Assembly continues to direct towards the continent; the wide international support that NEPAD has received; and the emergence of the Organization of African Unity to become the African Union.

In this respect, allow me to deal with some specific points that we believe reflect the African vision on all the issues that the Secretary-General has dealt with regarding the United Nations response to disputes on the continent. First, Africa in our view represents one single entity in which all the member States of the continental organization, the African Union, enjoy the same rights and responsibilities, and its problems and preoccupations receive the same attention and political will. Thus it is incumbent on the international community to pay equal attention to all the disputes that are raging on the continent, dealing with them with the same sense of responsibility and political will.

When the international community, as represented by the Security Council, takes on the role of settling disputes, whether involving Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone or Angola, it must not ignore the other hotbeds of tension and conflicts on the continent simply because they have not received international attention, such as Somalia, Burundi and Liberia. This trend should be

corrected, a view which is in total harmony with the emphasis placed by the Security Council itself and by the Millennium Declaration, adopted in September 2000.

Secondly, the Nations of Africa welcome the increasing attention that the United Nations is paying to the settlement of complicated and complex conflicts. Settling a conflict in one specific State is not as effective, as when settling a conflict from a regional perspective. Consequently, we appreciate the role that this international Organization is playing in the West African region, by opening a regional office in Dakar, headed by a high-level representative of the Secretary-General to the Manu River Union. We also welcome the plans being made to consider similar problems that are raging in the Great Lakes region in terms of their security, ethnic, military, political, economic and humanitarian dimensions. We look forward to the convening, when conditions are right, of an international conference on peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes regions, currently in preparation under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union.

Peacekeeping operations are an important instrument at the disposal of the Security Council to settle armed conflicts in Africa and for the establishment of peace in conflict areas on the continent. Surveying the great success achieved in Sierra Leone, thanks to the role played by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone and the political will demonstrated by the Council, we in Africa can conclude that the United Nations is indeed able to take courageous decisions to contain the fires raging on the continent and to ensure the various peace agreements to be implemented.

However, we must underscore once again that the Security Council's response to those conflicts must be commensurate with the magnitude of the challenges faced in Africa. Peacekeeping operations should be given the strong mandate and necessary military capabilities and forces to carry out their missions in a comprehensive and successful manner. Participation in such missions should be a collective responsibility shared by the major Western Powers on an equal footing with African and other developing countries that contribute, and sometimes sacrifice, the greatest number of personnel in United Nations operations on the continent.

Organizations, groups and African States have undertaken constructive initiatives for settling disputes on the continent. The United Nations supports those initiatives in the manner described by the Secretary-General in his report. While we welcome that support and look forward to its continuation, we wish to underscore the fact that the international community must be ready to put its political weight — and its military weight if necessary — behind such initiatives in order to achieve their objectives. We therefore look forward to the outcome of the Somalia reconciliation conference that began two days ago at Eldoret, Kenya, under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. We hope that the United Nations will make a serious contribution to the implementation of that conference's outcome, as expressed by the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, including by sending a peace-building mission to Somalia when conditions are appropriate. We also hope that the international community will play a similar role in Burundi when a ceasefire can be agreed on with those armed groups still outside the Arusha peace process, until national reconciliation in the country is completed.

Several other initiatives were adopted by African heads of State and Government in order to lay the foundation for peace and stability on the continent and to combat the root causes of such disputes and conflicts. Initiatives needing the support of the international community include the resolution adopted by the Durban Summit on the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the implementation of its protocol, as well as the declaration on security, stability, cooperation and development which was adopted two years ago at the Lomé Summit. The international community has also called for continuing its contribution in the consolidation of democracy and good governance in Africa — in accordance with the values and principles that the continent itself decided upon. Africa has occasionally preceded other communities in those values, especially through the decision not to recognize Governments that seize power by unconstitutional means. In that respect, we should mention that in Durban, African leaders adopted an important declaration on the principles governing democratic elections in Africa. The principles it contains, inter alia, determine the electoral responsibilities of African States, the rights and obligations of Governments and citizens and the ways and means by which the African

Union can supervise the principles that the African heads of State made a commitment to respect. We call on the international community to cooperate with us in implementing those principles.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): My delegation associates itself with the statement just made by the Ambassador of Egypt on behalf of the African Group. We welcome the joint debate on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/57/172) and on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/57/156 and Corr.1). We commend the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in mobilizing the international community to support Africa.

It has been long established that peace and development are inextricably linked. It therefore follows that for Africa to lay the foundation for sustained economic growth and sustainable development, conflicts should be prevented and resolved. Therein lies the uniqueness of the report on causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The report went beyond identifying the problems to recommend the comprehensive action to be taken by Africans themselves and by the international community in order to create the conditions necessary for sustainable development in Africa.

Conflict prevention is indispensable to durable peace. The report stresses the need to avoid a multiplicity of actions in mediation efforts and recommends channelling all assistance and efforts through a central mediator, be it the United Nations or a regional organization. My delegation concurs with this view, for when the mediation process is coherent and strengthened, the impact is much greater. In this regard, regional and subregional mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution should be supported.

Let me point out, Madam President, that it requires time and resources to put peace efforts into effect. Experience has shown that, in most cases, resources put into setting up peace mechanisms far surpass the successes achieved. This has a retrogressive effect and needs to be addressed.

In the same vein, post-conflict peace-building serves as the bridge between development and the recurrence of conflict. We, therefore, welcome the recommendations of the Secretary-General on peace-friendly structural adjustment programmes.

In this context, efforts at integrating a gender perspective in conflict resolution and humanitarian programmes, among others, need to be intensified. To this end, there should be increased cooperation between relevant United Nations bodies and the African Union's Women's Committee on Peace and Development. This includes donor response to the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa. We commend the efforts of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other United Nations agencies in peace-building activities, thus empowering women to play a constructive role in post-conflict peace-building activities.

In the area of promoting good governance, while a lot remains to be done, African countries have developed clear standards of accountability and participatory governance at the national and subregional levels. In promoting transparency and accountability in public administration, the Charter for the Public Service in Africa, which was adopted in Namibia in February 2001, is a positive development, and its implementation will enhance governance in the public sector.

The proliferation of small arms poses a threat to the security of the continent and has the potential to disrupt peace-building efforts. In this context, Namibia hosted in July a subregional workshop on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the system for standardized reporting on military expenditures, including transparency in military matters. It is our hope that this workshop, organized by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, will enhance greater participation concerning these two issues and serve as a confidence-building measure in the region. At this juncture, let me point out that the proliferation of arms is always preceded by the production of arms. Hence, addressing this problem should be a mutual and collective concern.

No other continent has had so many peacekeeping operations as Africa, and the lessons learned are mixed. As indicated in the report, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is the largest of the four

peacekeeping missions currently deployed in Africa. We applaud the regional efforts of the Economic Community of West African States and welcome the stabilizing role UNAMSIL is playing in that country. It should be pointed out that when a peacekeeping mission is deployed with a clear mandate, and when its size is commensurate with the magnitude of the task it is expected to carry out, it can make a difference. In this context, and while the respective situations might not be identical, the Security Council must draw lessons from UNAMSIL and approve the new concept of operation of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as recommended by the Secretary-General in his latest report.

We cannot speak of efforts to enhance Africa's development without addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which is ravaging the continent. In addition to the measures enumerated in the report, countries that are severely affected need help in the form of additional resources and capacity-building in order for them to address this pandemic. We call on the international community to support the Global Health Fund and to complement the efforts of African countries in this regard.

In this interdependent world, challenges defy boundaries. While Africa is home to the largest number of least developed countries, it receives the least of the world's foreign direct investment. Harsh and recurring environmental conditions affect food security in many African countries. Therefore, we support the recommendation of the Secretary-General in urging donor countries to take into account a multitude of factors when providing international aid to Africa.

We concur with the observation that infrastructure, including air transport, is crucial for Africa to attract foreign direct investment. As we mark the end of the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, let me state that no country has achieved and sustained rapid economic growth while depending on the export of raw materials. Africa's industrialization will add value to our primary commodities, create employment and decrease over-dependence on imports. Only then can we tap into the international market, thus creating economic growth and consolidating our efforts to eradicate poverty. Namibia commends the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for playing its proportionate part in complementing the efforts of African countries. We call for increased resources to UNIDO to enable it to effectively carry out its development mandate.

We welcome the steps taken to provide better market access to African products, and now we must work to remove existing obstacles to African agricultural products. In this context, we take interest in the post-Doha agenda and believe that increased technical assistance from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization will boost African countries' participating capacity.

We have always maintained that the multiplicity of initiatives on Africa's development should be streamlined and harmonized. In this respect, we welcome the coordinated United Nations system support to the African Union's initiative, the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

In our view, the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on causes of conflict remain valid and relevant in the transformation of the African Union. The implementation of these recommendations, my delegation believes, will also add high value to the achievement of sustainable development in Africa.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Sustainable development in Africa is an issue that concerns us all. That is why we held a special high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, an occasion in which the international community expressed its full support for a new partnership for the development of Africa.

Nevertheless, we were surprised and sorry to see that the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa was unable to conclude its work on the scheduled date, because it could not find the exact wording to convey in a resolution the much vaunted support of developed countries for Africa's development.

Meanwhile, 340 million people in Africa — half of its population — live on less than $1 a day. Life expectancy is 54 years. The under-5 infant mortality rate is 140 per 1,000 live births. In sub-Saharan Africa, 3.6 million children are born with a low birth weight;

100 million children do not attend school; 28 million people, including 3 million children, are affected by HIV/AIDS and have no access to the medicines or treatments necessary to fight the disease, prevent other diseases and relieve pain. Age-old diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and others just as lethal have not been eradicated. Only 48 per cent of the population has access to drinking water.

While a knowledge-based world economy is being developed, 41 per cent of Africans over the age of 15 are illiterate. Millions of people have no access to electricity; far fewer have access to a telephone line. There are only 18 main telephone lines per 1,000 inhabitants in Africa, while in developed countries, with only 15 per cent of the world's population, there are 567 lines per 1,000 inhabitants.

How is it that Africa, with 18.5 per cent of the world's population and the world's largest natural resource reserves, has only 1 per cent participation in the world gross national product and 2 per cent of world trade, while the world's three richest individuals own assets equal to the combined gross national product of the 48 poorest countries? Neo-liberal globalization exacerbates that imbalance and hinders African countries' integration into the world economy and participation in global decision-making. Obviously, the current unjust and unsustainable international economic order is still allocating to Africa a completely marginalized role as a source of primary wealth with no economic development. Today, Africa exports more capital than it receives in aid and financing. It is a net exporter of capital.

Furthermore, today there is more armed conflict in Africa than in any other continent; 20 per cent of Africans live in countries affected by conflict, causing many deaths and the displacement of millions of people, both refugees and internally displaced persons. No review of the causes of conflict in Africa can ignore, as some claim it should, the centuries of colonial exploitation, when African economies were plundered and distorted, turning them into suppliers of natural resources, raw materials and cheap labour in a continent that, given its resources and potential, could today be one of the most developed in the world.

Africa does not need lessons, recipes or adjustment programmes to resolve its conflicts. Rather, it needs financial resources, official development assistance, debt cancellation and the support of the United Nations and the international community. Think of what could be achieved if just a tiny portion of the $849 billion spent every year on military expenditures were placed in a United Nations fund to foster the sustainable development of the Africa countries. Think of what could be done if a development tax of just 0.1 per cent were imposed on international financial transactions. That would generate resources of nearly $400 billion per year, which, if it were well managed by the United Nations and its agencies, could changed the current situation.

Despite what is said in debates and expressed in many resolutions, emphasis continues to be placed on reacting to conflict in Africa, rather than on prevention. There are many initiatives and all kinds of proposals on Africa in the United Nations, but there is still a need for an integrated approach to the resolution of issues related to peace, security and development of the continent. Nor is there a United Nations mechanism for regular efficient evaluation of the implementation of agreements.

Africa can wait no longer. International cooperation is indispensable. The African peoples need the support of the international community, as the few resources they have must be used to pay off foreign debt. Only Africa spends four times as much on foreign debt service payments than on education and health combined. African countries will be able to achieve sustainable development only if they are accorded special and differential treatment, guaranteed market access, the drop in prices of basic goods ends, foreign debt is cancelled, access to technology is ensured, official development assistance is increased and financial resources are provided without interference or conditionality.

Cuba, as a third-world country, not only attaches great importance to South-South cooperation, it also feels a sincere commitment and clearly defined solidarity with its African brothers. Despite the economic blockade imposed on my country for more than four decades, 200,000 Cubans have been working in dozens of African countries in sectors such as health, agriculture, education and sports. Nearly 30,000 African young people have graduated in Cuba. More than 3,000 are studying in our country today on scholarship, more than 1,000 of whom are studying medicine. Almost 1,000 Cuban doctors are working today free of charge in rural areas of 12 African countries. We are working to set up medical schools

with Cuban teachers to provide free education to ensure that health personnel are given on-the-spot training.

I reiterate once again my country's offer to help the fraternal African peoples in the fight against the AIDS pandemic by sending 4,000 doctors and health-care workers to set up the infrastructure necessary for people to get the medicine, guidance and follow-up care they need. They would also help in developing human resources. We would send teachers to set up medical schools and provide qualified staff to cooperate in campaigns against AIDS and other diseases. We would also provide free retroviral therapy to 30,000 patients annually.

Cuba is a poor country. Let us leave words aside. Let selfishness cease. Let us act with urgency.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We meet today to address two major issues confronting Africa: conflict and development. The Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict in Africa (A/52/871) is now in its fifth year. The entirety of the United Nations membership has since lent unequivocal support to its recommendations. Thanks to the matrix designed by the Secretariat, we can now assess and monitor progress in their implementation. Member States have also been apprised of the constraints faced in realizing the report's objectives. Secretary-General Kofi Annan deserves our appreciation for mobilizing a United Nations system-wide response to translate that wide range of recommendations into actions.

Africa today presents a considerably different perspective from even the immediate past. Many of the armed conflicts have been resolved. Several United Nations missions are in transition from peacekeeping to post-conflict peace-building. The international community has shown greater understanding of the stakes involved in supporting peace and development in that continent. The African leadership has amply demonstrated its commitment and its vision. With the matrix at hand, we now know where the progress has been stalled and what the impediments are. We also know what is required to address those constraints. The way ahead from here lies in redoubled effort on the part of all stakeholders to secure the achievement of our goals.

The Security Council has devoted considerable attention to Africa's conflicts as well as to their causes and their consequences. As a member of the Security Council in 2000 and 2001, Bangladesh supported greater United Nations involvement in Africa. For our part, we have amply underscored our commitment by contributing troops and other personnel to almost all United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. As the Bangladesh Foreign Minister said, "We have sent our peacekeepers even to the most dangerous theatres. We have done this in keeping with our Charter commitment and in the spirit of solidarity with Africa."

The linkage between the root causes of conflict and underdevelopment is nowhere more pronounced than on the African continent. We have espoused the philosophy of prevention, we have contributed to the debate in the Security Council, and we have taken the lead in defining preventive actions. Security Council resolution 1366 (2001), which Bangladesh steered, has already provided the Council with the legislative mandate for prevention in a number of areas. We hope that the General Assembly will soon grant its approval to a broader mandate for United Nations system-wide action for the prevention of armed conflict. We have also been a strong supporter of the Dutch proposition that in peace operations, there must be no exit without strategy, because therein lies the crucial link between durable peace and sustainable development. In that context, we share the views expressed by Ambassador Aboul Gheit on behalf of the African Group a short while ago.

A critical element in development is the ownership of strategies. Bangladesh is enthusiastic about the fact that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an initiative led, owned and managed by the African Union. That was echoed by many during the final review of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) in two recent meetings of the Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on that subject. In the run-up to the UN-NADAF review meetings, on 16 September, the Assembly unanimously adopted a Declaration on NEPAD (resolution 57/2). Once again, we stressed that NEPAD represents a compact among African nations and the international community in addressing the aspirations of the continent.

Perhaps Africa has had enough of analysis of its problems: the Millennium Declaration and the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg Summits, to name some of them. Now that our brethren in Africa have challenged us in the international community to match their commitments with our contribution, the central

question remains: where do we go beyond this review and today's debate?

Obviously, a first step is to factor in the lessons we have learned in realizing the goals and implementing the programmes of UN-NADAF over the past decade. We share the Secretary-General's assessment that there are a number of important lessons to be learned from the experience of UN-NADAF: that development cooperation with Africa requires a new orientation, that the international community should honour its commitments, that strengthened advocacy remains essential for Africa's development, and that peace and security are absolute preconditions for Africa's sustainable development.

That also leads us to the premise of the need for comprehensive and strong support for partnership from the international community. That must come in the form of eliminating trade barriers to Africa's exports. It must come through fulfilment of our partners' commitment to reversing the trend of declining aid to Africa and to building its capacity, as most recently pledged in Monterrey. It must come by way of the faster, deeper and broader debt relief for 22 African countries required under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. And it should come through redesigning support for African capacity-building so that technical assistance resources are directed more towards human development and capacity-building.

Again, I would stress that NEPAD provides a critical opportunity to our development partners to demonstrate that they are serious about Africa. We saw that reflected in the Group of Eight Africa Action Plan, adopted last summer. In that context, we continue to believe that all development issues should be addressed with equal weight. From our own experience in a comparable milieu, we know that a selective approach to development will not pay. An equally important element in ensuring NEPAD's success at the national, regional and global levels remains the financing of all its operational modalities.

There are two more aspects, I believe, that deserve to be stressed in ensuring the comprehensive consideration of Africa's development. In addressing conflict prevention, we recognized that many conflicts are rooted in endemic poverty and underdevelopment, in weak or non-existent institutions, in the absence of good governance and in the gross and systematic violation of human rights. That recognition inevitably leads us to what was underscored at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held last year. The Brussels Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries outline a menu of actions to be implemented by the international community to address the socio-economic challenges confronting the 49 most impoverished countries. Thirty-four of those are in Africa. The fulfilment of the commitments of the Programme of Action will go a long way towards addressing Africa's problems.

A second aspect relates to utilizing the potential of South-South cooperation for Africa. In the light of its own development experience, Bangladesh clearly sees the strength and the scope of such a cooperative framework. It entails assisting countries in a similar situation to share experiences in a number of development sectors.

It is in that context that Bangladesh can and will strive to contribute meaningfully to Africa's rebuilding. Over the years, Bangladesh has experimented with a number of innovative approaches to development — such as microcredit and non-formal education — to address extreme poverty, to empower women and to create social safety nets for the needy. By involving non-governmental organizations and all civil society actors, we have been able to strengthen our institutions and to deliver broad-based social sector programmes. We remain ready to share our experiences with Africa. Let me reiterate that some of our experiences in these spheres are already being shared by a number of African countries in terms of activities at the national level.

We are gratified to see that these concerns and thoughts have been incorporated into the draft resolution on which the Assembly will take action at the end of its consideration of this item. We fully endorse them. We would join our African brethren in monitoring progress achieved in implementing them and the commitments to Africa that the international community has made in other forums. We have confidence in Africa's potential. We believe in the veracity of the Roman writer Pliny the Elder's classical dictum: "There is always something new out of Africa".

Mr. Ayari (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I should like to express our satisfaction at the holding of this debate, which is of the utmost

importance for Africa and which shows the international community's increased interest in the development and stability of that continent, which for decades has endured the horrors of armed conflict, poverty and marginalization.

In addition, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for the report (A/57/172) related to the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report (A/52/871) on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Indeed, four years later, the analyses and the recommendations contained in that report retain all their pertinence. The Secretary-General rightly emphasizes the critical link between peace and development and proposes the adoption of a comprehensive and integrated approach to preventing conflicts, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development in Africa.

In that respect, I would like to recall that, during its presidency of the Security Council in February 2001, Tunisia proposed a debate on the consolidation of peace because we were convinced of the absolute need for the international community to deal with the socio-economic causes of instability and conflict so that peace and security, once established as a result of international efforts, would be truly lasting.

The report before us emphasizes that progress has been made in a wide range of areas through the implementation of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, and we welcome that fact.

We are particularly pleased that the main crises on the African continent are in the process of being resolved, even if the situation remains disturbing and peace is still fragile in certain regions. Such progress is mainly due to the efforts of African countries themselves, as well as of the commitment of the international community.

It should be acknowledged that for many years the United Nations has devoted significant resources to peacekeeping operations in Africa. Four such operations are currently under way, the most important of which are the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

Even though we welcome the support provided by the United Nations to African initiatives aimed at resolving conflict, we believe that is it particularly important to further strengthen coordination and consultation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, the Southern African Development Community and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, which, because of their geographic proximity, are sometimes better equipped to determine the most suitable moment for the Council's preventive action, to identify the real needs of Africa and to indicate the most appropriate responses.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the role played by UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone, which is consequently once again moving towards peace and stability. My delegation also welcomes the close cooperation between ECOWAS and UNAMSIL aimed at bringing peace and stability back to the Mano River Union region.

With regard to the situation in the Great Lakes region, we are particularly pleased by the withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. My delegation is concerned about the security gap left by that withdrawal and therefore calls on MONUC to deploy, as quickly as possible, troops in the areas that have been evacuated so as to fill that gap, in accordance with phase III of MONUC's deployment.

I would like to focus on certain aspects of the report of the Secretary-General that we believe deserve particular attention. My delegation welcomes first of all the interest shown by the United Nations system in preventive action. The well-known old adage, "Prevention is better than cure", is a wise one. Such a policy could save thousands of lives and protect precious resources for development.

In this connection, we welcome the creation within the Council of a Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. That Working Group has already drawn up a significant programme of work in which the Economic and Social Council has already taken part, thus illustrating how joint action by two of the principal organs of the United Nations is beneficial when addressing peacekeeping and international security in all their dimensions.

Another relevant subject is the proliferation of weapons, including small arms. This scourge is one of

the main obstacles to a return to peace and development in conflict-affected countries, particularly in Africa. The fact that a number of initiatives have emerged in the past few months indicates that there is a true awareness in Africa and in the international community as a whole with regard to that problem.

We call for respect for Security Council embargoes and other sanctions relating to weapons. Indeed, the Council debate of 11 October 2002 emphasized the role that should be played by that body, in coordination with Member States and regional organizations, so as to ensure greater respect for arms embargoes and better control and monitoring of the circulation of small arms. Furthermore, we believe that the preparation of an instrument to help identify and trace illicit weapons could be an effective way of dealing with that destructive trade.

Another important element on which my delegation would like to focus is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. In this regard, I would like to emphasize the need to strengthen such programmes in the context of peacekeeping operations in countries emerging from conflict. The success of such a process will, of course, require adequate financing, the provision to demobilized former combatants of vocational training and the development of projects to generate income and employment opportunities. We believe that that would be the best way of investing in peace.

My delegation believes that sanctions should be used only as a last resort, when all other peaceful means have been exhausted, so as to prevent further suffering for the civilian population. If sanctions are considered to be necessary, they should be more accurately targeted at certain individuals or specific entities within a State, as was the case with UNITA.

At a time when significant progress is being made in resolving conflicts that have for so long hindered Africa's march toward progress and well-being, it is essential that everything be done to enhance the economic development of African countries, particularly those emerging from conflict. We note, however, that very little progress has been made in a number of areas, such as eradicating poverty, preventing and treating infectious diseases, ensuring food security, developing infrastructure, building institutional capacity for cooperation and regional integration and protecting the environment. Those are endogenous factors that are destabilizing in and of themselves, but the international situation adds to the difficulties. Worsening terms of trade, the crushing burden of debt service, levels of external support that are stagnating or even decreasing, insufficient foreign investment — which is an absolute necessity for Africa's development — and difficulties of access to international markets are ills that are shared by all the countries of Africa.

With the creation of the African Union and the launching of NEPAD — an African initiative that emphasizes peace, stability, good governance, democracy and respect for human rights as prerequisites for development — Africa has begun a new chapter in its history. Africa aspires henceforth to play its proper role on the international stage and to bring about the comprehensive development of the continent. It will be able to depend on its own capacities and potential, both natural and human, but it will also need outside support that will allow it to make significant strides forward and to reduce the gap that separates it from the developed world. That is in the interests of Africa as well as of the international community as a whole.

We have great hopes, therefore, that we will see a increase in solidarity that will help Africa to eradicate the ills from which it suffers. The Monterrey Conference and the Johannesburg Summit, as well as the Action Plan adopted by the Group of Eight at Kananaskis, open up promising prospects that will, through the commitments entered into, allow Africa to achieve the development of which it has been deprived for so long.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): The United Nations has accorded high priority to the development of Africa — rightly so, in the opinion of my delegation. In this regard, we thank the Secretary-General for his reports on this important subject.

Africa's development is a major challenge for all of us. For many years now, parts of that great continent have been mired in abject poverty, malnutrition and disease, and been afflicted by armed conflicts that are anathema to growth and sustainable development.

The international community, therefore, cannot shut its eyes to the needs of Africa. In an era of rapid globalization, it is essential that parts of the African continent not be marginalized and deprived of the benefits of a globalized economy. Thus, the United

Nations has taken a necessary step for Africa: mobilizing international action for its sustainable growth and development. More than this, however, all the stakeholders' partnerships with Africa are the key to its realization.

Since 1990, the United Nations has been in the forefront of engaging the support and assistance of all the stakeholders for Africa's development. Year after year, the General Assembly has adopted relevant and appropriate resolutions to address the manifold challenges of Africa. This expression of commitment has culminated anew in a resolution reviewing and appraising the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The Philippines joins other delegations in welcoming the resolution under the item on the final review and appraisal of UN-NADAF containing the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We are confident that this resolution will offer a realistic road map for addressing effectively the challenges facing Africa.

NEPAD, as a Programme of Action of the African Union, embodies the vision and commitments of the African Governments and peoples. We believe that NEPAD will be bolstered by the African Peer Review Mechanism, because it underlines the commitment of African countries to sound political, economic and corporate governance.

But more than this, there is a need for active partnerships between Africa and the various stakeholders, including the international community; the developed countries; the developing countries, through South-South cooperation; as well as the United Nations system.

The Philippines will do its part, but we believe that developed partners must also extend all possible assistance and cooperation to African countries in order to strengthen key institutions such as the civil service, the judiciary, the business sector and civil society.

South-South cooperation can also play a pivotal role and should therefore be vigorously promoted. In this area, the Philippines may be able to share its experiences in human capacity-building, including its positive and progressive record of Government partnership with all stakeholders, including the business sector and civil society.

Efforts leading to regional integration must also be pursued. As the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Blas F. Ople, stated in the debate on this issue on 16 September last, "Africa and ASEAN should forge stronger ties ... for there is much that we can learn from each other." He added that Africa can study ASEAN's modest success in regional integration, particularly in overcoming the factors that hinder effective regional cooperation and integration.

As I said earlier, globalization must not marginalize millions in Africa. It is imperative that the flow of aid to the continent be stable and predictable, and that it increase. We therefore urge once again all developed partners that have not done so to meet the aid target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product.

There is also a need for greater access of African products to global markets. Moreover, the international community must remain serious about debt relief. We thus support the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

The Philippines has been supporting peace efforts for Africa and will continue to do so. We believe that development and economic growth are dividends of peace. Thus the Philippine Government will continue to support every effort to bring peace and stability to Africa — from efforts to stem the illicit flow of small arms, to efforts aimed at resolving existing conflicts and preventing new ones through conflict-prevention measures and measures such as the reintegration of armed combatants.

Once again, the key to Africa's development is a holistic and comprehensive partnership among its many stakeholders. There is no doubt that, with a renewed sense of partnership and solidarity with Africa, that continent will move progressively on the road towards sustainable growth and development.

Mr. Shinde (India): We thank the Secretary-General for the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We also thank him for the reports which have been prepared for the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the

United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

We believe that it is imperative for any discussion on the causes of conflict and on the promotion of durable peace and stability to highlight the beneficial role that democracy can play in this regard. Democracy is, first and foremost, a moral imperative. It also provides the basis for durable peace and stability. We recognize that African leaders have themselves accorded the highest priority to democracy, and we believe that this trend deserves to be encouraged by the international community.

The Secretary-General has, in his report, provided a broad overview of various initiatives taken to respond to situations of conflict, including to curb the proliferation of small arms. While we commend these initiatives, we do feel that more needs to be done, particularly with regard to stemming the illicit trafficking of small arms. Illicit weapons have been the weapons of choice in an overwhelming number of conflicts in the past decade and claim each year hundreds of thousands of lives, the overwhelming number of which are civilian lives. It is important, in our view, for all responsible States to undertake an obligation not to supply such weapons to non-State actors. Manufacturers and exporters should be subject to the strictest controls. There should be strict insistence on authenticated end-user certificates to ensure effective control over the export and transit of such weapons. It is also necessary to have a mechanism to trace and mark small arms, and to ensure that they are not diverted from legal channels into illicit trade.

The Secretary-General, in his report on the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, has made a number of very specific recommendations. The most important, in our view, is the one recommending the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the development policy framework around which the international community, including the United Nations system, should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development. We are confident that the United Nations system will do so.

It is, in our view, very important that the international community, particularly donors, accept NEPAD as the policy framework for Africa's development. The report of the independent evaluation has made amply clear the importance of Africa's being allowed to determine its own policies and priorities. It states very cogently:

> "Democracy is undermined if elected African Governments have policies imposed from outside, leaving their democratic institutions without any real choices". (*A/AC.251/9, p. 7*)

India's own relationship with Africa is built on strong historical and political foundations. Leaders of India's freedom struggle were convinced that the independence of India would not be complete until all of Africa was free from colonial domination. Over the last four decades, it has been our objective to build on this foundation by imparting substantive economic content to this relationship. I am happy to state that we have been exploring ways and means by which we can provide support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development in the true spirit of South-South cooperation. Our Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched a programme known as Focus Africa. This seeks to build upon the success that we have already achieved in trade between India and sub-Saharan Africa, registering an increase of more than 280 per cent in the last nine years.

The Indian Institute of Foreign Trade recently completed a study that identifies bottlenecks and suggests practical measures for raising the level of our commercial exchanges with the African continent. We have decided to increase the availability of credit to national and regional institutions on the continent and have set for ourselves a target of $200 million to be made available in the next year.

A conference on India and NEPAD, held in New Delhi in July this year, brought together representatives of Indian industry and financial institutions and their partners in Africa. The conference addressed, among other issues, the question of improving the utilization of the lines of credit extended by India to many countries in Africa. Following the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, India also decided to cancel all bilateral debt owed to it by the highly indebted poor countries.

We have noted the importance accorded in NEPAD to promoting the private sector, and the call to the international community to promote entrepreneurial development programmes for training managers of African firms. The conference on India and NEPAD aimed at initiating significant dialogue between the private sectors and financial institutions of India and of

Africa. We have announced our intention of instituting a training programme for private sector executives, to be conducted in India. This programme will, we hope, also contribute to expanding contacts between our respective apex chambers of commerce and industry.

Health is one of the priority sectors identified in NEPAD. We would be happy if Indian industry could contribute, even if in a modest way, to enhancing access to affordable medicines in Africa. A four-day India-Africa health summit was held in Mumbai in September last year. It provided an opportunity for participating health ministers and their delegations to interact with leading Indian pharmaceutical companies and health care service providers. This, we hope, will lead to the formation of joint ventures and further economic cooperation between India and Africa in the health sector.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) constitute another sector in which India and Africa can cooperate in a meaningful manner. The information technology (IT) industry in India has registered a compounded annual growth rate of more than 42 per cent over the last five years. That is more than double the growth rate of the IT industry in most developed countries. We note the objective in NEPAD to develop a pool of ICT-proficient young people and students from which Africa can draw ICT engineers, programmers and software developers. We have made a beginning in this avenue for cooperation and are in the process of establishing a centre of excellence in information and communication technologies with one of our partners in Africa.

India obviously has limited resources available for partnership in capital-intensive areas. It is, however, our belief that our partnership can be meaningful, particularly in the area of human resource development. Knowledge and technology, in our view, flow more easily from one developing country to another because what matters is not the simple acquisition of technology but innovation, and its adaptation and adjustment to local conditions. Yet this need not be restricted to what is termed as appropriate technology. It can also be the application of cutting-edge technology to stubborn problems and impediments to development. The Indian experience embraces both possibilities. We would be happy to share that experience as an expression of our commitment to economic growth and sustainable development in Africa.

Mr. Kazemi Kamyab (Islamic Republic of Iran): It is indeed a great honour for me to have the opportunity to address the General Assembly on the final review of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). Let me seize this opportunity to reiterate my country's full solidarity with African countries, all of which belong to the family of developing economies.

Looking at Africa and judging from various socio-economic indicators, one cannot but arrive at the inevitable conclusion that despite the large number of wide-ranging efforts and initiatives made in the past, the overall economic and development situation of the continent as a whole and of most of its individual countries is disquieting, to say the least. Those efforts and initiatives, including UN-NADAF, have simply failed to deliver. The report of the Secretary-General (A/57/156) on the final review and appraisal of UN-NADAF and the independent evaluation on that issue are further testimony to a rather sad and disappointing conclusion.

It is exactly for that reason that we welcome the recommendation of the Secretary-General on the closure of UN-NADAF and its replacement with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), initiated from within Africa, and that NEPAD should be the policy framework around which the international community, including the United Nations system, concentrates its efforts for Africa's development. The NEPAD initiative is a clear indication of the serious approach of African leaders to questions related to reform and governance. Equally, it also reflects the fact that African countries have recognized their primary responsibility for the development of their own continent and their own countries; this indeed, is a welcome development.

I would like to urge the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure an effective and coordinated United Nations response to NEPAD, which has already been adopted at the African Union Summit. From our point of view, action in this regard should take into account the final appraisal of UN-NADAF and in particular the lessons learned. That would not only provide a further opportunity for us to take stock of a comprehensive intergovernmental review of developments in Africa over the past decade, but would also help in adjusting policies and practices in the light of lessons learned.

Much has been said and written about conflicts in Africa and their devastating impact on the overall development of the continent. There is hardly any need for further attempts to enumerate the causes of tragic local conflicts gripping Africa. Rather, it is high time for the international community in its entirety and, of course, first and foremost, Africans themselves, to put an effective end to the involvement and instigation of foreign companies and Governments in fomenting and protracting these deadly conflicts. Beyond such meddling, however, the real long-term culprits remain the state of underdevelopment and the lack of democracy.

We believe that development is the best building block of peace. Peace and development are simply indivisible. Therefore, achieving development — and in a very practical, tangible sense, economic growth and poverty eradication — should be at the heart of conflict prevention strategies. At the same time, there should be a coordinated and comprehensive approach towards combining peace-building, emergency assistance and long-term development support measures, also as they relate to the destruction of weapons and the reconstruction of economic, social and physical infrastructure. In this particular connection, tangible and concrete support should be given to the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict, with a view to assessing their humanitarian and economic needs and elaborating a long-term programme of support for implementation that begins with integration of relief into development.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): I wish to thank the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for their reports on the final review and appraisal of implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Ten years ago, the General Assembly decided that Africa would be one of the priorities of the United Nations in the 1990s and, in keeping with this decision, the international community committed itself to working with the African countries to address the serious economic and social problems facing their respective countries. Built into this programme for change and the advancement of the people of Africa was also a commitment on the part of African Governments to promote dialogue, to implement economic and social policies with the goal of increasing the growth rate of their economies, and to enhance the health and welfare of the people.

That mutual commitment was also preceded by the five-year United Nations Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development, and in the light of that experience, it would not be entirely surprising if the launching of a new initiative for Africa may generate some scepticism.

Having studied the Secretary-General's report on the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/57/156 and Corr.1), my delegation recognizes that there is a combination of factors which have denied the majority of African people their fundamental right to certain basic acceptable standards of living.

The United Nations appraisal of the previous Programme for African Economic Recovery and Development in the 1980s, initiated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), acknowledged the severe international economic climate during the five-year period of the Programme, especially plummeting commodity prices on the world market, leading to a loss of revenue amounting to $6 billion by African States during the first year of the Programme. During the five-year period, it is estimated that Africa lost more than $50 billion in export earnings.

Prescribed structural adjustment programmes resulted in tremendous social costs, and this has been identified as one of the major factors which retarded the advancement of the African people. Poverty increased overall, with education, health, nutrition, employment and incomes all declining.

The New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s raised the level of expectation for the development of Africa. This time, there was a commitment by the partners to meet certain goals which would lead to an overall objective of an average growth rate of at least 6 per cent.

The process, as we now recognize, has been disappointing. Not only have the external commitments been less than what was required to make a difference, but we must also face the reality that, despite the economic and political reforms which many African countries began to introduce, internal political difficulties in some countries limited the effect of the external support that was provided.

The lesson from all this is that the prescribed development model and the development strategy for Africa may not always be appropriate and that there is need for some adjustment to take the peculiarities of Africa into account.

The Assembly adopted a resolution on 16 September this year issuing a declaration on a new Partnership for Africa's Development. My delegation wholeheartedly supports this Africa-led initiative and welcomes the commitment made by the African countries to adhere to certain principles of governance.

We also encourage the donor community to do it right this time. Resources are needed to give meaning to the spirit of true partnership, which will be of mutual benefit in this world of interdependence.

I wish to thank the Steering Committee countries — South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria, Egypt and Senegal — for the important role they have played in bringing the process to this launching point. Special thanks should also go to the Secretary-General for his commitment to the development of Africa and to all the other countries and partners with whose support this new process will achieve the success we all hope for.

Mr. Niang (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I am very happy to extend to the President our great thanks and appreciation for his highly commendable initiative of dedicating this important meeting to two issues of concern to the international community, and which reflect very clearly the major challenges facing Africa today.

I should first like to say that my delegation fully endorses the statement by the Permanent Representative of Egypt, made on behalf of African countries. I should also like to offer my warmest congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his very relevant progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/57/172). I would also like to commend him for the very serious and swift manner in which he has been carrying out his mandate. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Mauritius, Mr. Jagdish Koonjul, who, at the head of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, has in a very short period of time been able to implement a global and integrated approach to conflict in Africa.

In December 2001, in its resolution 56/37, the General Assembly endorsed some of the Working Group's proposals, and decided, inter alia, briefly to suspend the activities of the Group in order to consider further measures for the implementation and monitoring of initiatives on Africa. It also decided to continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's 1998 report.

Today we are pleased to see that tangible progress has been made in strengthening confidence-building measures; in establishing a spirit of peace and reconciliation; in the process of regional cooperation and integration in Africa; in the harmonious coordination and integration of bilateral and multilateral initiatives for economic and social development in Africa; in the area of the promotion, maintenance and strengthening of peace; and in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In West Africa, the progress can be gauged by, inter alia, United Nations support for initiatives to re-establish trust and promote cooperation within the Mano River Union, the helpful support by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for political normalization in that country, and the timely establishment of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa.

Although this progress is significant, peace has still not come to many parts of the continent, where the illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons is making the situation of entire populations very fragile and obstructing commendable efforts by West African States to build a community area of peace, security and prosperity.

The 15 States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) took the bull by the horns by deciding to adopt the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa and to set up national committees to curb the illicit propagation of these dangerous weapons. But nobody should be mistaken about this fact: these courageous initiatives can be successful only if the international community continues its valuable support for the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and

Development, which is designed to support the Moratorium.

Other problems include the ravages of malaria and HIV/AIDS, which have a negative impact on human resources, as we work together to develop our countries in Africa.

The difficulties facing the African continent are thus multifaceted. Only a concerted and holistic approach can overcome them. We are pleased to note the significant progress that has been made in coordinating the activities of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council, particularly with the recent establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African countries emerging from conflict. We cannot overemphasize the fact that studying the case of Guinea-Bissau could be useful as a reference case for United Nations efforts at peace-building in that area, which has suffered so much from conflict.

Also, I greatly appreciate the finely honed progress report by the Secretary-General; it has highlighted the indissoluble dialectic link between the promotion of peace and sustainable development.

This leads me to the second item in our debate. Here I would like to say how greatly I appreciate the excellent report of the Secretary-General (A/57/156) on the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). It describes some of the lessons learned in the 10 years of our common commitment to the implementation of UN-NADAF and makes relevant and specific proposals as to what should be done in the future.

The Senegalese delegation endorses the Secretary-General's recommendation on translating into reality the entire international community's interest in NEPAD through tangible actions. focusing on: vigorously combating poverty, which undermines any effort at development; developing industry and agriculture; promoting regional economic integration; protecting the environment; protecting peace, democracy and human rights; establishing a code of good political and economic governance; and developing the use of information and communication technologies at the continent-wide level.

That is why the advent of NEPAD, a programme designed by Africans for Africans, must bring a new dynamic into North-South relations, where strategic choices freely identified by African leaders must be in consonance with United Nations initiatives and the Millennium Development Goals.

I should also like to say that Senegal fully agrees with the belief of the Panel of Eminent Personalities that the work of the United Nations as it pertains to Africa needs to become more relevant and more effective. Without prejudging future recommendations of the Secretary-General on this subject, my delegation would like to see follow-up and support for NEPAD by the United Nations system and other parts of the international community; at the Secretariat level this would be the responsibility of a single structure with the resources to cope with its wide-ranging and important mandate.

In that vein, I also welcome the adoption by the Group of Eight (G-8) at Kananaskis, Canada, of the Plan of Action for Africa, reflecting the will and commitment of the G-8 countries to support Africa in its new efforts for peace and development through NEPAD.

Obviously, African development cannot be accomplished by the sons and daughters of Africa alone. In this era of globalization, our global village will benefit if all participate fully in promoting a world of peace and prosperity in solidarity.

Ms. Anguiano Rodríguez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Over the past year, we have noted significant progress towards resolving a number of conflicts in Africa. In that context, it is important to mention the cases of Sierra Leone, Angola, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Madagascar, a country in which it was possible to overcome a political and Government crisis, which could have led to a widespread armed conflict.

These achievements are due to a great extent to the political will and pragmatism of the parties involved in the conflicts, as well as to internal circumstances that opened the path to peace, which is what clearly happened in Angola, with the death of Jonas Savimbi. In some cases, this has also been the result of the mediating role of the United Nations and, in others, the result of steps taken by the main regional and subregional organizations and of particular countries and prestigious African political figures. The role of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which is now the African Union (AU), and the role of the continent's subregional organizations have also

been fundamental in this process, as well as has the level of cooperation between the United Nations and those organizations.

The Secretary-General has emphasized in his report (A/57/172) that peace and stability, good governance, democracy and respect for human rights are preconditions for attaining development. Nevertheless, it is also certain that peace and stability cannot be lasting, and democracy cannot be strengthened, without development. The States that are emerging from conflicts — particularly those that are poorest — lack the financial resources and the infrastructure to jump-start their economies. The support of the international community, including international financial institutions, is fundamental in such cases, and that must be reiterated. Moreover, we must not forget that the maintenance, and especially the consolidation, of peace require sustained national and international efforts in which a series of factors are taken into account. The premature withdrawal of international support for a peace process — particularly the early termination of a peace mission — could easily result in the breakdown of peace and the recurrence of conflict.

An essential element for lasting peace is national reconciliation, not only at the level of the principal actors in the conflict but also at that of society as a whole, particularly because civilian populations are increasingly used as military targets, but also because sometimes it is civilians who are partially responsible for the most horrendous violations of human rights. National reconciliation commissions and war crimes tribunals in their various modalities, or a combination of both, are an instrument that can contribute in an important way to such reconciliation. That is why my Government made a symbolic financial contribution to the trust fund for the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Mexico believes that it will be an effective mechanism for assisting in national reconciliation and justice in that country, which in turn will benefit the stability of the Mano River region. We trust that the Court will work in close cooperation with the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone for the sake of that objective.

An aspect that merits attention in peacekeeping and peace-building processes is the degree of political, economic and social stability experienced in countries of the same region. The Great Lakes region is an example of how a conflict in a particular country can affect another country's internal situation and regional stability in general. That is why, as Chair of the Security Council Sanctions Committee concerning Sierra Leone, Mexico has insisted that the situation in that country should be considered in its regional context, not in isolation. Peace in Sierra Leone is still very fragile, and its consolidation will depend in large part on the situation in Liberia not deteriorating and on the Mano River region as a whole enjoying political, social and economic stability.

Another aspect of peace-building that has been pointed out — not only in the report but also in other contexts — that deserves our full attention is the issue of the processes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. It is essential to systematically incorporate gender perspectives into those processes. Recently, we had the opportunity to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique. On that occasion, we noted that the success of the peace process in that country is due largely to the good development of the process of demobilization and reintegration of former combatants into civilian life. The experience acquired in Mozambique should prove useful in other situations.

Mr. Maiga (Mali) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I should like to associate myself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Egypt, speaking on behalf of the African Group.

Africa attaches particular importance to the two items before the General Assembly, related to the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa and to the independent evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). The delegation of Mali would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Panel of Eminent Personalities for their contributions to the quality of the presentation of the reports under those items.

The report relating to the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/57/172) contains useful and up-to-date information on areas of high priority for Africa — namely, peace, security, good governance and sustainable development. My country, Mali, through its initiatives and actions, and African leaders have always focused on the maintenance of peace and

security as well as on the creation of conditions for integrated and endogenous development at the continental level.

The creation of the African Union proceeds from the resolve of African countries to put in place a continental organization with a view to accelerating the integration process. African subregional organizations are essential tools in conflict prevention, in the preservation of peace and security and in the implementation of development programmes. My delegation believes that the support of the United Nations — and of the international community in general — for the new dynamic in Africa is more than ever necessary at a time when the continent is focused on the factors of stability, peace and good governance with a view to relaunching socio-economic development and emerging from the vicious circle of poverty.

My delegation welcomes the actions undertaken by the United Nations and by its funds, programmes and specialized agencies in the context of supporting African initiatives concerning conflict management, reconstruction and the rehabilitation of economies damaged by the effects of conflicts. For the actions of those institutions and organs to have an impact, it is necessary to transform the commitments signed during various conferences requesting contributions for emergency assistance and for financing United Nations operational activities into financial resources, thus allowing the implementation of established assistance and rehabilitation programmes.

When it was adopted, UN-NADAF gave rise to legitimate hopes for the development of Africa. It should be noted that, despite vigorous actions taken to promote economic policy reform and structural adjustments with a view to implementing commitments made vis-à-vis the international community, the results fell short of the expectations of African peoples. The report prepared by the Panel of Eminent Personalities charged with reviewing UN-NADAF states: "Instead of growing, ODA to Africa declined during the decade, from $28.62 billion in 1990 to $16.38 billion in 2000, a decline of 43 per cent." (*A/AC.251/9, p. 4*)

In addition, tariff and non-tariff barriers are among the obstacles to the commercial expansion of African development in an increasingly globalized world. The fund for the diversification of African products that was envisaged in UN-NADAF never materialized. The burden of foreign debt, despite the initiatives undertaken with a view to lightening it, continues to be one of the major obstacles to development programmes because of its heavy drain on our meagre resources.

In the light of those considerations, the review report submitted by the Panel of Eminent Personalities leads to the conclusion that UN-NADAF has been a failure.

To reverse those negative trends of the past decade, Africa needs more than ever the firm commitment of the international community to support its development programme. NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, is the best framework for dialogue and for relaunching a partnership between Africa and the rest of the world.

Designed by Africans themselves, NEPAD is a strategic framework, with Africa's options for development within the context of the African Union. The issues of good governance, democracy, poverty reduction, achieving integrated endogenous development in the context of the African Union are the main focus of NEPAD.

NEPAD, which will replace UN-NADF, needs more than ever the international community's support in order to succeed. We must draw lessons from UN-NADF's failure, so that we can make NEPAD a real success. As in the case of UN-NADF, the success of NEPAD will depend primarily on responses to the basic issues of mobilizing sufficient resources for Africa, access to markets, foreign debt and strengthening Africa's development capacity. In that context, an appropriate follow-up monitoring mechanism is essential. At the inter-governmental level, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will play a central role. The United Nations follow-up mechanism should be strengthened to coordinate and channel the efforts of the various players towards Africa. Similarly, structures within the United Nations Secretariat must have sufficient financial and human resources to implement NEPAD.

Africa is resolved more than ever to take charge of its economic and social development within the context of the new partnership. The international community's support is necessary to assist Africa in implementing its development programme. Success in that area will be an important parameter in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

objectives of September 2000, whereby the General Assembly unanimously supported NEPAD.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on items 33 and 41 for this meeting. We shall continue the debate on this item this afternoon at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.